

**EXETER-WEST GREENWICH
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

September 11, 2012

MINUTES

The form and content of these minutes conform to commonly accepted standards and shall become the official record of the meeting after review and approval by the School Committee. By definition, minutes are not a verbatim record for the proceedings.

The Exeter-West Greenwich Regional School District School Committee held a meeting on this date at 6:00 p.m. in the Jr. – Sr. High School Library. Members present were Teri Maia-Cicero, Chairperson; Mark Rafanelli, Vice-Chairperson; Valerie Zuercher, Clerk; Claudine Pande, Lee Kissinger. Others present: James Erinakes, II, Superintendent; Robert V. Ross, Director of Administration

ORDER – Chair Cicero called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Clerk Zuercher read the District Mission Statement.

Open Forum – Egidia Vergano gave a brief overview about the recycling programs she coordinates at Wawaloam and Metcalf schools. She offered her opinion that because the state has now moved to single stream recycling, it is the perfect opportunity to expand the district's program. Expansion of the program will require support of the School Committee and Administration.

Chair Cicero advised that it would be more appropriate to discuss this matter during agenda item, *Recycling Discussion*.

ROUTINE ITEMS – CONSENT AGENDA- Superintendent Erinakes gave an overview of the Consent Agenda.

Member Pande made a motion to accept the consent agenda; Member Kissinger seconded the motion; and voted 5/0 in favor.

The following items were approved:

- A. Approval of Minutes – Regular Meeting Minutes of August 28, 2012;
Executive Session Minutes of August 28, 2012**
- B. Personnel Items**
 - 1. Appointments**
 - 2. Leaves of Absence**
 - 3. Resignations**
 - 4. Grievances**
 - 5. Non-Renewals**
 - 6. Recalls**
 - 7. Sabbaticals**
- C. Bills – In the amount of \$233,068.83; Accruals in the amount of \$6,040.35**

D. Home School Approval

1. Returning Family – Grades 12, 10, 7
2. Returning Family – Ages 14, 17

End Consent Agenda

Correspondence – (1) August 21, 2012 NEASC correspondence

2011 – 2012 Monthly Budget Projection – Robert Ross reported that the projected June 30, 2012 General Fund Balance should be approximately 1.2 million dollars.

2012 – 2013 Budget – No report

MONTHLY SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT(S) – Policy Subcommittee – No report

IT Subcommittee – No report

Public Relations Subcommittee – No report

MONTHLY STATUS REPORTS – Superintendent – Members did not express questions or comments regarding the monthly status reports.

Business

Special Education

Maintenance

Technology

NEW BUSINESS – Out of District Busing (Monsignor Clarke, Prout) – Robert Ross reviewed the reasons for and process by which changes occurred this school year in out of district transportation, which affected the morning bus routes for the Prout School and Monsignor Clarke School students. He said the premise for the change was that School Committee requested admin look for cost savings in all areas of the budget, including transportation, during the budget season. The district does realize a savings of \$30,000 as a result of changes to these routes. Mr. Ross acknowledged the parents in the audience who asked to be put on the school committee meeting agenda for consideration to return to the former route. He described various ways that the changes have adversely impacted these families.

The School Committee and parents in the audience engaged in a lengthy discussion/debate regarding the bus route changes. Concerns raised by parents included last minute notification of the change, inefficiency in the routing, unacceptable ride times, unsafe group stop locations, lack of a monitor on the bus, students arriving to school late, equal standards for in district and out of district student riders.

Clerk Zuercher said she realizes the inconvenience. She agrees that late notification of the change and students' arriving late to school is unacceptable and that needs to be addressed. However, group stops are what most school districts do. When developing the

budget and the realization is that the line item for private school transportation is almost \$300,000.00, that is approximately \$15,000 per child, the School Committee needs to try to save money without hurting the education or safety of all students. The committee took money from a lot of different areas and Representative Tomasso was involved in the discussion. The district is realizing a genuine savings of \$30,000 by doing the group stops.

Chair Cicero spoke about her four-years of experience as a parent dealing with the state transportation provider. Her son graduated from Prout last year. He was on the bus for 1.5 hours to get to school every day. She agreed that the ride is too long and stated that the state transportation provider group is unorganized and very frustrating to deal with. However, the only control the School Committee has regarding out of district transportation is to say it wants group stops. It is RIDE that creates and executes the bus routes.

Clerk Zuercher asked Mr. Ross to look into whether the bus transporting Prout School students from EWG High School could leave a bit earlier to help them to arrive to school on time. Mr. Ross said he would. He pointed out that generally it takes a week or so to get into a rhythm, which can gain travel time. He said he would also investigate the monitor situation, which is a safety issue.

An unidentified audience member said parents are here to ask the committee to be their liaison in contacting RIDE regarding unsafe routes and students not getting to school on time. Parent Jessica Smith said the current bus situation is unsafe. She acknowledged that RIDE created the routes but pointed out that it was the School Committee that gave RIDE permission to make changes. She asked the committee to reconsider, and to ask RIDE to “fix this mess”. Another unidentified parent requested that the committee consider restoring last year’s bus schedule or consider following the district policy equally for both in district and out of district students in terms of where those group stops are. Also, not to change the current afternoon busing schedule for this year.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the School Committee directed Mr. Ross to examine the concerns raised by parents. Chair Cicero said this item would continue to the next regular meeting agenda of September 25. On behalf of the committee, she encouraged parents to contact Mr. Ross with any recommendations they have and to take part in the process of addressing this matter with RIDE.

Vice Chair Rafanelli made a motion to move up item, VI. B. Recycling Discussion on the agenda; seconded by Member Pande; and voted 5/0 in favor. The motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – Recycling Discussion – Egidia Vergano disseminated handouts relating to the EWG paper recycling program and the RI Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) recycling profit sharing program. She explained that municipalities

now share in recycling profits based on the tonnage of recyclables the town delivers to RIRRC. The profit sharing funds are earmarked strictly to invest in the town's recycling programs, including increasing education outreach in local schools. The state has moved to single streaming recycling. Now would be the perfect opportunity to expand the EWG recycling program. She requested that recycling dumpsters be provided at Wawaloam and Metcalf Schools. The cost of the dumpsters is \$90 each per month. Ms. Vergano proposed contacting the towns to discuss whether profit sharing funds could pay for the dumpsters.

Clerk Zuercher said she supports expanding the recycling program. The program benefits kids and the communities. She wonders if the towns could pay for the dumpsters. If not, the School Committee should do so. She requested to bring this item back to the next meeting agenda after talking with the towns. She will call Member Donovan, (liaison to the town of Exeter) or will speak to the town of Exeter if Member Donovan is uncomfortable discussing the matter since she is not here tonight. Chair Cicero, (liaison to the town of West Greenwich) agreed to contact West Greenwich. This item will continue to the next regular meeting agenda.

Attorney Henneous arrived at this time, (7:20 p.m.).

Policies Review/Adoption – 2500: Managing Student Pre-Enrollment Registration and Count – 2nd Reading – Member Pande advised that sections V. and VII. of policy 2500 require revisions. The word *re registering* in both of those sections needs to be changed to *reaffirm* and *reaffirmation*. The committee reached consensus to adopt policy 2500 this evening, with the amendments stated by Member Pande.

Clerk Zuercher made a motion to accept Policy 2500 as amended tonight; seconded by Member Kissinger; and voted 5/0 in favor. The motion passed.

1401: School Committees Public Interactions – Amendment – Member Pande explained the amendment to policy 1401, which was that the policy subcommittee added the decorum section to an existing policy. Chair Cicero said she believed the committee could vote on the policy tonight. Clerk Zuercher questioned if voting tonight would be an issue since all members are not present. Chair Cicero said that both Members Donovan and McFadden have seen the policy, which they received in their meeting packets. Additionally, Member McFadden sits on the policy subcommittee.

Vice Chair Rafanelli made a motion to adopt policy 1401; seconded by Member Pande; and voted 5/0 in favor. The motion passed.

Capital Asset Project Housing Aid – Mr. Ross referenced his *Capital Projects for 2013 Housing Aid Reimbursable* report and reminded members that the district is under no obligation to execute any of the projects in the plan. Submittal of the plan puts the state

on notice that the district might do projects for the 2013 school year totaling \$401,300. Mr. Ross advised that the cost of the Capital Projects submitted to RIDE exceeds the available balance in the Capital Reserve Fund. Therefore, the committee should consider reviewing and discuss prioritizing the Capital Projects that have been submitted.

Member Pande referenced the senior high school backup electrical generator at an estimated cost of \$200,000 and said she does not believe the School Committee ever agreed to move forward with that project. She would need someone to come to the School Committee meeting to explain to the committee the benefits for a generator at the senior high school. Chair Cicero and Clerk Zuercher agreed.

Mr. Ross said he wants to bring the generator back to the School Committee as a topic for discussion perhaps for the first meeting in October. He has two quotes in hand and a narrative from Eastern Electric regarding the generator. He agreed with having non-bias expert testimony at that meeting.

Member Kissinger acknowledged that the committee did not agree to move forward with the generator project. He said he feels however there is a definite need for a generator at the high school. He listed various reasons to support his view that a generator is necessary to protect that building.

Chair Cicero concluded that the senior high school backup generator discussion would be on the first meeting agenda in October, to include expert testimony. Member Pande requested not to have a vendor presenting to the committee. Member Rafanelli asked that the testimony include whether a generator is necessary.

Out of District Transportation – Place holder item.

Technology Update – None

Capital Project Update – Mr. Ross told member the Capital Project Building Committee would be meeting next Wednesday.

Reports/Comments – Vice Chair Rafanelli requested to have a School Committee meeting presentation regarding technology – (5-year plan). Superintendent Erinakes said that the district does have that in writing; however, the problem is that the RI Department of Education changes are not built-in. The plan will need to be cleaned up. This item will be brought to a future meeting agenda.

Member Kissinger asked for the status of the RFP for the information technology survey. Mr. Ross said he received a bid spec from North Kingstown School Department, which is an edited version. The district is working to clean up the edited version to make it its own. The RFP should be completed for the next business meeting.

In response to Chair Cicero's inquiry, Superintendent Erinakes said that a date has not been identified yet for moving to Google Email. Principals are aware and ready to move forward. The district is looking at an October transition.

Important Dates and Meetings – Tuesday, September 25 2012 – School Committee Meeting

EXECUTIVE SESSION – RIGL 42-46-4 and RIGL 42-46-5 – Vice Chair Rafanelli moved to go into Executive Session at 7:55 p.m. in accordance with 42-46-5(a)(9) – CBA – Grievance(s); 42-46-5 (2) – CBA – (C94/Teachers' Association) – Negotiation Discussion and/or Pending Litigation; and 42-46-5 (a)(1) – Personnel; seconded by Member Kissinger; and voted as follows:

Teri Maia-Cicero	Yes
Mark Rafanelli	Yes
Valerie Zuercher	Yes
Lee Kissinger	Yes
Claudine Pande	Yes

Meeting recessed to Executive Session at 7:55 p.m.

Clerk Zuercher moved to reconvene to Open Session; Member Rafanelli seconded the motion; and voted 5/0 in favor.

Meeting reconvened to Open Session at 8:45 p.m.

There were no votes taken during Executive Session.

Adjournment – Member Kissinger moved to adjourn; Vice Chair Rafanelli seconded the motion; and voted 5/0 in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

**ROBIN CERIO
CLERK**